

## Sullivan County NH

Type of Meeting: Sullivan County Full Delegation  
Date / Time: 14 July 2008 / 4:00 pm  
Place: Sullivan County Jury Assembly Room

### Participants

Representatives: Peter Franklin (Chair), Ray Gagnon (Vice-Chair), Ellen Nielsen (Clerk), John Cloutier, Larry Converse, Tom Donovan, Sue Gottling, Matthew Houde, Arthur Jillette and Carla Skinder

Commissioners: Ethel Jarvis

County Employees: Greg Chanis, Interim County Manager; Ted Purdy, Nursing Home Director

Public Participants: none

Press: none

The meeting was called to order by Rep. Franklin at 4:10 pm. This meeting was a continuation of the recessed county convention of 30 June, 2008, and the purpose of the meeting was to continue work on the county budget for fiscal 2009.

### Nursing Home Revenue:

At the previous delegation meeting on 8 July, the estimated Medicaid daily census and estimated revenue for Medicaid patients had been discussed. Moving on to Medicare issues, Rep. Gottling asked if the projected Medicare daily census of 14, with each filled bed providing approximately \$150,000 per year of revenue, was too optimistic. Mr. Purdy explained that since the projected census figure of 14 had appeared in the commissioners' budget, he had reviewed the statistics. In fiscal 06 the census had been 13.7, in fiscal 07, 13.4, and in fiscal 08, 11.9. However, the rate per day for these patients had increased each year, so there had not been a significant loss of revenue. Discussion followed. Representatives Houde and Donovan said it was important, in terms of the big picture, to set a goal of raising the census figure to 14 or even 16. Mr. Purdy recommended lowering the projected Medicare daily census figure to 13. The discussion continued, with the focus shifting to private pay patients. In this case, it appears that the projections in the commissioners' budget are accurate, or even slightly low.

Representatives agreed that if the projected revenue figures for the nursing home were realistic, and if the projected costs of running the nursing home were accurate and could not be cut dramatically, it will cost the county over \$2,000,000 per year to operate the nursing home. Rep. Gagnon asked if there were too many staff at the nursing home. Mr. Purdy said that there were not too many staff, because when the census falls, the nursing home cuts staff, and that the commissioners had already made extensive cuts in their budget.

*Rep. Gottling moved that the projected private pay daily census number be raised to 19 at the rate of \$205 per day and the projected Medicare daily census number be lowered to 13 at the rate of \$430 per day. The motion was seconded by Rep. Skinder.*

*Rep. Houde moved to divide the two parts of Rep. Gottling's motion and Rep. Converse seconded the motion to divide the question. The motion to divide the question failed by a vote of 3-7.*

*Rep. Gottling's motion passed 8-2 by a roll call vote, with representatives voting as follows: YES—Cloutier, Donovan, Franklin, Gagnon, Gottling, Jillette, Nielsen and Skinder NO—Converse and Houde*

Rep. Franklin asked if the delegation wanted to revisit the Medicaid daily census and revenue projections which had been discussed during the previous delegation meeting on 8 July. Rep. Converse pointed out that the county is required to pay 25% of the cost of Medicaid. Mr. Chanis explained that this payment is not part of the nursing home budget—it appears in the Human Services section of the county budget, and that starting next year, the counties will pay all of the non-Federal share of Medicaid—50%. Mr. Purdy recommended that the delegation leave the original numbers, based on a Medicaid daily census of 123, in place. No motion pertaining to the Medicaid daily census was made.

Rep. Donovan asked Mr. Purdy if the respite care provided by the nursing home for people living in their homes would increase nursing home revenue significantly. Mr. Purdy said that it would be difficult to predict the amount of revenue from respite care. Rep. Donovan pointed out that when caregivers have a good experience with respite care, i.e. it is easy to access and the individual receives appropriate care, they are more likely to choose the county nursing home if a time comes when they no longer are able to care for the family member at home.

#### **Mileage Increase for County Employees:**

At the request of Mr. Chanis, the delegation shifted attention from the nursing home budget to the increase in mileage reimbursement recommended by the IRS. Mr. Chanis had calculated that the total mileage reimbursement for county employees would increase from \$27,700 to \$33,400 if the mileage rate were increased. This figure does not include a mileage increase for the delegation.

*Rep. Skinder moved to increase the mileage rate for county employees to 58.5 cents per mile. The motion was seconded by Rep. Gagnon and passed 9-1 with a division vote.*

*Rep. Gottling moved that the mileage rate for the delegation should remain at 48.5 cents per mile. Rep. Converse seconded this motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.*

#### **Nursing Home Appropriations:**

*Rep. Converse moved that the capital improvements budget for the nursing home be reduced by \$195,000—the money which had been allocated for television sets for patients, air conditioning on the third floor of the Stearns unit, and air conditioning in the physical therapy department. The motion was seconded by Rep. Gagnon.*

Vigorous extended discussion followed this motion. Several representatives pointed out that the big-ticket item, the air conditioning on Stearns 3, was a health issue for frail elderly patients, not a luxury. Others noted that the air conditioning for Stearns 3 had been put in the budget every year for the last nine years and then removed, and since the county is in worse financial shape than ever, this is not the year to spend the money. Other less expensive strategies for cooling the rooms were suggested but Mr. Chanis pointed out that humidity is 60% of the problem.

Because the building has a flat roof and no attic, attic exhaust fans are not an option. In some cases, residents have their own window air conditioners (which increases the electric bill.) At one point, Rep. Converse attempted to withdraw his motion but Rep. Gagnon did not withdraw his seconding of the motion. Rep. Franklin said that if we do not make substantial cuts in the budget this year we never will be able to reduce the deficit budget. Mr. Chanis pointed out that of the \$900,000 in capital improvements that had been requested, \$400,000 already had been cut, and that the value of buildings owned by the county is at least \$60,000,000 and that it will cost more in the long run if these buildings are not properly maintained. Rep. Converse asked if there might be some adjustments to the budget because of changes in the retirement system. Mr. Chanis said that the 15% increase in contributions to the retirement system, which has been incorporated into the fiscal 2009 budget, may not take effect until next fiscal year. This would reduce the retirement expense for fiscal 2009 by about \$100,000. (During the lengthy discussion, Rep. Gottling had to leave in order to attend a Sunapee selectmen's meeting.)

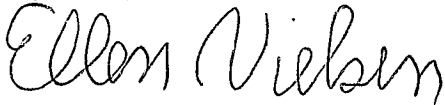
*Rep. Cloutier moved to call the question on the motion to cut the capital improvement expenditures by \$195,000. This motion passed 9-1 by a voice vote.*

*The motion to cut the capital improvement expenditures by \$195,000 passed 6-3 by a roll call vote, with representatives voting as follows: YES—Cloutier, Converse, Franklin, Gagnon, Houde and Nielsen NO—Donovan, Jillette and Skinder*

After the vote Rep. Converse said that except for these capital improvement items, the only cuts which could be made in the nursing home would be "cutting muscle."

The meeting was recessed shortly after 7:00 pm, to re-convene at 8:00 am on Wednesday, 16 July 2008.

Respectfully submitted,



Ellen Nielsen, Clerk

JUL 18 '08 AM 11:31

# SULLIVAN COUNTY NH—STATE/COUNTY DELEGATION

## MOTION AND VOTING SHEET #1

DATE: 14 July 08

TIME:

MOTION: To increase the private pay Patient number to 19 at a rate of \$205 per day and to decrease the Medicare patient number to 13 at the rate of \$430 per day.

MOTION MADE BY: Rep. Gottling

MOTION SECONDED BY: Rep. Skinder

MOTION: CARRIED X DEFEATED TIED

WAS THERE DISCUSSION? Yes

VOICE VOTE:

ROLL CALL:

REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME	YES	NO
Rep. John Cloutier	X	
Rep. Larry Converse		X
Rep. Tom Donovan	X	
Rep. Brenda Ferland		
Rep. Peter Franklin	X	
Rep. Ray Gagnon	X	
Rep. Suzanne Gottling	X	
Rep. Matthew Houde		X
Rep. Arthur G. Jillette Jr.	X	
Rep. Ellen Nielsen	X	
Rep. Jay Phinizy		
Rep. Beverly Rodeschin		
Rep. Carla Skinder	X	

SULLIVAN COUNTY NH—STATE/COUNTY DELEGATION

MOTION AND VOTING SHEET #2

DATE: 14 July 08

TIME:

MOTION: To divide the question on Rep. Gottling's motion

MOTION MADE BY: Rep. Houde

MOTION SECONDED BY: Rep. Converse

MOTION: CARRIED

DEFEATED X

TIED

WAS THERE DISCUSSION? Yes

VOICE VOTE: (Show of hands 3-7)

ROLL CALL:

REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME

YES

NO

Rep. John Cloutier

Rep. Larry Converse

Rep. Tom Donovan

Rep. Brenda Ferland

Rep. Peter Franklin

Rep. Ray Gagnon

Rep. Suzanne Gottling

Rep. Matthew Houde

Rep. Arthur G. Jillette Jr.

Rep. Ellen Nielsen

Rep. Jay Phinizy

Rep. Beverly Rodeschin

Rep Carla Skinder

SULLIVAN COUNTY NH—STATE/COUNTY DELEGATION

MOTION AND VOTING SHEET #3

DATE: 14 July 08

TIME:

MOTION: To increase the mileage rate for county employees to 58.5 cents per mile retroactive to July 1, 2008

MOTION MADE BY: Rep. Skinder

MOTION SECONDED BY: Rep. Gagnon

MOTION: CARRIED X

DEFEATED

TIED

WAS THERE DISCUSSION? Yes

VOICE VOTE: (Show of hands 9-1)

ROLL CALL:

REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME

YES

NO

Rep. John Cloutier

Rep. Larry Converse

Rep. Tom Donovan

Rep. Brenda Ferland

Rep. Peter Franklin

Rep. Ray Gagnon

Rep. Suzanne Gottling

Rep. Matthew Houde

Rep. Arthur G. Jillette Jr.

Rep. Ellen Nielsen

Rep. Jay Phinizy

Rep. Beverly Rodeschin

Rep Carla Skinder

SULLIVAN COUNTY NH—STATE/COUNTY DELEGATION

MOTION AND VOTING SHEET #4

DATE: 14 July 08

TIME:

MOTION: To leave mileage rate for delegation at 48.5 cents per mile

MOTION MADE BY: Rep. Gottling

MOTION SECONDED BY: Rep. Converse

MOTION: CARRIED X

DEFEATED

TIED

WAS THERE DISCUSSION? Yes

VOICE VOTE: Unanimous

ROLL CALL:

REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME

YES

NO

Rep. John Cloutier

Rep. Larry Converse

Rep. Tom Donovan

Rep. Brenda Ferland

Rep. Peter Franklin

Rep. Ray Gagnon

Rep. Suzanne Gottling

Rep. Matthew Houde

Rep. Arthur G. Jillette Jr.

Rep. Ellen Nielsen

Rep. Jay Phinizy

Rep. Beverly Rodeschin

Rep. Carla Skinder

SULLIVAN COUNTY NH—STATE/COUNTY DELEGATION

MOTION AND VOTING SHEET #45

DATE: 14 July 08

TIME:

MOTION: To reduce the capital budget of the nursing home by \$195,000—televisions and air conditioning on Stearns 3

MOTION MADE BY: Rep. Converse

MOTION SECONDED BY: Rep. Gagnon

MOTION: CARRIED X

DEFEATED

TIED

WAS THERE DISCUSSION? Yes

VOICE VOTE: ROLL CALL:

REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME	YES	NO
Rep. John Cloutier	X	
Rep. Larry Converse	X	
Rep. Tom Donovan		X
Rep. Brenda Ferland		
Rep. Peter Franklin	X	
Rep. Ray Gagnon	X	
Rep. Suzanne Gottling	X	
Rep. Matthew Houde	X	
Rep. Arthur G. Jillette Jr.		X
Rep. Ellen Nielsen	X	
Rep. Jay Phinizy		
Rep. Beverly Rodeschin		
Rep Carla Skinder		X